

TRIBUTE TO JOYCE BAYNES

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Joyce Baynes from Teaneck—a woman from my district who represents all that we aspire to be.

Her life story was told in a newspaper from my district, The Bergen Record, in its weekly "Inspirations" column.

Ms. Baynes did not quit when her husband died 2 days after her third child was born. She did not quit when she only had one salary and some survivor benefits to feed four hungry mouths. She did not quit when one of her children was diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome.

She persevered. She did all the things that a mother should do. And she did all the things a father should do. She is an example which we all should follow. Her success and that of her children is humbling to all.

Instead of using the challenges she faced as excuses for failure, Ms. Baynes used them as motivations to excel. She is unique and worthy of our mention on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives today.

I submit the news article for the RECORD so that my colleagues, present and future, can draw inspiration from her.

The article follows:

[From the Bergen (NJ) Record, Apr. 27, 1997]

HARDSHIP ONLY DEEPENS A MOM'S LOVE

(By Caroline Brewer)

March 6, 1978, found Joyce Baynes reveling in one of the happiest days of her life. Her third son, Marcus, had just been born.

Two days later, she was writhing in the pain and sadness of one of the worst days of her life. Her 31-year-old husband, Walter Jay Baynes, had just died of systemic lupus disease.

The awesome collision of a son's birth and a husband's death left Joyce Baynes crushed. It was the end of the world she knew and loved and had hoped to spend the rest of her days delighting in.

"I felt totally helpless. Everything became just a fog," she recalled.

But with four mouths to feed on one salary and survivors' benefits, Baynes didn't have the luxury of disappearing into the fog. So she created a new world in the two-parent-flush suburb of Teaneck, a world centered on devotion to her sons.

Nearly 20 years later, Baynes basks in the light of three well-rounded young men—one a graduate of Dartmouth, one a junior at Princeton, and one a freshman at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

She's sure their father would have been proud. After all, Walter had degrees in physics and medicine from Dartmouth and Harvard and worked as an ophthalmologist and emergency room doctor.

Baynes herself has math degrees from Swarthmore and Harvard. A longtime educator, she joined Teaneck schools in 1988 as mathematics supervisor and in 1995 was promoted to assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

She managed to juggle career and parenthood only by staying organized.

"I shopped on the weekends and cooked enough meals on Sundays to last the whole week," said Baynes, who is 50. "If you're going to try to beat all these odds, you have to plan."

Her plan was to keep sons Jeffrey, Jason, and Marcus busy. They were taught piano

and played midget league baseball and basketball. They also sang in the choir of Christ Episcopal Church in Teaneck and were acolytes.

Despite Baynes' own hectic schedule, she was in the bleachers for all of the boys' sporting events, and, like a lot of fathers, coached them on their performance. "Arch it up! Bend your legs!" the tall, curly-haired mom would cry out during basketball games, to her sons' embarrassment.

Baynes' consistent presence made an impression.

"I remember one time I was supposed to play in a baseball game, and she got dizzy [from exhaustion] and had to go to the hospital. I wasn't going to go to the game, but she told me to go. Then, she came, too!" said Jason, now 21.

"I see how a lot of parents put their jobs first. But not my mom. Sometimes I'd call her and she'd be in an important meeting and she'd come to the phone," he added.

When she did come to the phone, Jeffrey, always a worry-wart, was struck by how she never seemed stressed.

"She could have a paper due Tuesday, a board meeting Wednesday, and be dealing with seven employees," he said. "But she would seem very calm and have a plan for how she's going to handle each thing."

Looking like a force of calm in the midst of a storm was just one way Baynes mothered by modeling the behavior she expected from her children.

"They didn't hear me cursing or lying or see me smoking. They also saw that the rules I set up for myself, I followed," Baynes explained.

"I remember Jason asking me how it is that [they] never had a desire to smoke or do drugs. It was just kind of our existence that we never had those desires," she elaborated.

Baynes' sons didn't have those desires, but they don't pretend to be angels. Jeffrey battles selfishness. Jason believes he's kin to Mario Andretti; one night two years ago, he was caught speeding down a highway at 100 mph.

Marcus had a long bout of immaturity, but now says his mother's integrity is so powerful, it haunts him hundreds of miles away at Cambridge, Mass.

"She's turned us into such honest people. I have some people say, 'Your mom's at home, you can do whatever you want.' But I won't. The respect for her is so great," Marcus said.

When Marcus turned 5, doctors confirmed that he had a mild case of Tourette's syndrome, which causes facial and vocal tics, jerking, and, in some people, involuntary uttering of obscenities.

Marcus displayed compulsive behavior, such as rewinding taped songs dozens of times to catch the lyrics. But he never cursed. Baynes believes that's because she didn't.

The Tourette's did boost Marcus' already high energy level, which in turn made the job of raising the three boys that much more difficult.

They argued, wrestled, and banged holes in the walls. Jason would scream and holler when it was time to go to bed. During their younger years, Baynes couldn't even take a bathroom break until her sons were in bed.

By day's end, she was drained.

"I used to just think I had bright kids, but when I reflected on all that I did, I realized I did play a big part in this," she laughed.

A big part, indeed. Even though the boys were intelligent, the eventual Teaneck High graduates weren't always motivated. Though Jeffrey was a fixture on the honor roll, Marcus and Jason didn't really focus on academics until their sophomore years. It was not any lecture from their mother, but her years of setting high standards, that eventually brought them around.

After graduation, Jeffrey, the oldest, tallest, and most reserved son, walked in his father's shoes to Dartmouth. He graduated in 1993 with a degree in math and works at the agricultural firm of American Cyanamid in Parsippany. He's also pursuing a master's degree.

Jason, the middle son, whose face and personality are most like his father's, is a junior at Princeton. Like Walter, the self-assured Jason plans to be a doctor, specializing in the study of the brain.

Marcus, the youngest son, who with his mother's love and patience mastered his academics as well as his Tourette's, is winding up his freshman year at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

As for Joyce Baynes, the struggle is not over. Her income was too high for the boys to qualify for full scholarships to college. So she footed the \$20,000-a-year bill for Jeffrey's stay at Dartmouth and still shells out more than \$20,000 a year for schooling for Jason and Marcus.

Yet no one in the Baynes quartet would trade the creature comforts they've sacrificed, or even a new dad, for the new world that was forced on them when fate took an unexpected and agonizing turn.

"It would have been nice to have remarried," Baynes said, "but after three or four years of dating and nothing working or feeling right, I felt I had built such a relationship with the boys that it would have been hard to bring in someone new."

Jason, a toddler when his father died, always felt secure with just his mom. "I didn't even know people had two parents until maybe I was 9. I thought my life was great with just one parent," he said with the deep, throaty laugh the Baynes' boys share.

Marcus, too, likes his family as it is. He, most of all, used to pine for a father figure. "Sometimes I would get jealous when I'd see commercials and TV shows with kids playing with their father. We never got to do that."

"But," Marcus concluded, "I've lived a happy life. When people say a child needs a father and a mother, it depends on who you have. Not every child has a mother as wonderful as Joyce Baynes."

A SPECIAL SALUTE TO ARTISTIC DISCOVERY WINNERS

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute young students from the 11th Congressional District of Ohio who participated in the annual An Artistic Discovery competition. Later this month, student artwork from around the Nation will be placed on display in a special corridor of the U.S. Capitol. I take special pride in sponsoring the Artistic Discovery competition for students in my congressional district. The art contest provides an important means for recognizing the creative talent of our Nation's youth.

I am proud to report that An Artistic Discovery is enjoying great success in the 11th Congressional District. This year, students from 12 schools submitted a record 403 art entries. Our judge had the difficult task of selecting a winning entry from this outstanding collection of artwork.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer a special salute to Monica Grevious, who is a 12th grade student at Bedford High School. Monica's work, a